



# Information for Caregivers During COVID-19



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Health Administration  
West Palm Beach VA Medical Center





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# Letter for Family Members of VA Inpatients

April 22, 2020

## Dear Family Members:

Thank you for choosing the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center, where meeting Veterans health care needs is our number one priority. Visitation has been restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that part of the healing process is to have a positive support system; therefore, we have taken steps to provide virtual ways for you to be able to connect with your loved one.

### What you need to know:

- We have the capability to provide both video interactions via the use of iPads, tablets and phone calls. You will need to have access to a smartphone, laptop, computer, iPad or tablet with internet connection in order to be able to video call with your loved one.
- To connect with your Veteran via video or phone, please contact **Social Work Service at 561-422-6846** and ask to speak with your loved one's assigned Inpatient Social Worker.
- We have a Caregiver Support Program that provides services for caregivers such as support groups, community resources, and more. If you are interested in this program, please reach out to one of our **Caregiver Support Program Coordinators at 561-422-8262 ext 3586.**
- Should you identify a need after your loved one is home, please feel free to contact your Veteran's **Primary Aligned Care Team (PACT) Social Worker at 561-422-6846.**

We value our caregivers and their health. For your convenience, we have enclosed the following information to assist you, please see attached:

- a. Caregiver Support Program Information During COVID-19
- b. Home Safety Instructions for COVID-19
- c. Taking Care of your Behavioral Health
- d. Community Resources (Listing does not mean endorsement by VA)

For further updates on our operational status, please visit [www.westpalmbeach.va.gov](http://www.westpalmbeach.va.gov).

Respectfully,

**West Palm Beach VA Medical Center**

# Department of Veterans Affairs Caregiver Support Program Information for Caregivers During COVID-19

## TIP SHEET

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Caregiver Support Program (CSP) recognizes that caregivers play a critical role in caring for Veterans every day, and even more so now, in the time of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) believe symptoms appear 2 to 14 days after exposure. VA recognizes that new information and guidance is being released frequently. For the most up to date information, please visit VA's Public Health page at [www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus) or the CDC's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV>.

Your health and well-being are important to us. The CSP is here to provide support to you during this uncertain time. Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator (CSC) can link you to important resources and services that are available to you, as a caregiver, and to the Veteran. Visit [https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New\\_CSC\\_Page.asp](https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp) to find a CSC. You may also contact the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274 to get support from caring licensed professionals.

In addition, here are some important things to be aware of, to help you care for your loved one and yourself during this time:

### Prepare

- Check medication and supplies and submit refills or requests for renewals via My HealtheVet at <https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home>, or the call-in number (1-877-327-0022).



- Your health and well-being are also important. Contact your health care provider for medication refills and to learn more about what telehealth services may be available to you.
- Learn to use VA Video Connect through the VA mobile app store at <https://www.mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect> or by contacting the Veteran's VA care team, before any urgent problems arise.
- Have 2 weeks-worth of non-perishable food at home so you are prepared to stay home for some time. It is important to minimize trips to the grocery store. If needed, contact your local CSC for information on community resources.

### Create Back-up Plans

- Contact family and friends who can assist with grocery shopping, pharmacy pick-ups or other essentials.
- Arrange a back-up plan for who can provide care to the Veteran, should you fall ill.



- Keep records and important information about the Veteran's care, including an Advanced Care Plan found at [https://www.va.gov/geriatrics/pages/advance\\_care\\_planning\\_topics.asp](https://www.va.gov/geriatrics/pages/advance_care_planning_topics.asp), in a safe and accessible place, should another person be needed to provide care. Make sure you share the location or a copy of the plan with appropriate family or friends.

## Protect yourself

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid people who are sick.
- Avoid places where many people are closely gathered.

## Protect others

- If you are sick, stay home, stay away from others, stay in touch with your doctor, and avoid public transportation. Read more at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm/sleeve or use tissues.
- Dispose of tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects often.

## Monitor

- Monitor yourself, the Veteran and other household members, for symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat). Contact your or the Veteran's health care team for guidance and medical advice.
- If the Veteran has a chronic condition, their immune system may already be stressed. Follow the health care plan to avoid further stress to the Veteran's immune system.
- If you have help coming in from outside the home, make sure they observe all the precautions you are taking (i.e. hand washing, hand sanitizing) and self-care procedures. Request that they monitor themselves for any symptoms of COVID-19.

## Finding Ways to Connect & Receive Support

Taking care of your well-being, including your mental health, is essential during this time. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. Many people may experience stress, fear, anxiety, or feelings of depression. This is normal. There are things that you can do to manage your stress and anxiety:

- Exercise regularly, try to eat well-balanced meals, and get plenty of sleep.
- Limit alcohol.
- Practice breathing exercises and/or meditation. VA has many free mental health apps for Veterans found at <https://www.mobile.va.gov/appstore/mental-health>.



- Take breaks from the news.
- Stay connected with others while practicing social distancing (see below for tips).
- Participate in activities or hobbies that you enjoy or learn a new one.
- Keep your current mental health appointments. VA offers both video and phone tele-mental health options that do not require you to go to your closest facility in-person should you have a medical concern or need to follow specific social distancing guidelines in your community.
- Learn ways to connect with VA providers using telehealth options and schedule or reschedule your appointment online by visiting <https://www.va.gov/health-care/schedule-view-va-appointments/>. If you are requesting a new mental health appointment, please call your local VA and they will work to arrange an appointment for you. If you need same day access for mental health services, call your local VA to request this and you will be connected to care. To locate a VA facility, visit <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>.



## Social Distancing

During times of social distancing, it is normal to have increased feelings of loneliness, sadness, fear, or anxiety. It is important for everyone to stay connected. Here are some ways to feel more connected:

- Seek support from family, friends, mentors, clergy, and those who are in similar circumstances. While face-to-face communication may be difficult, be flexible and creative using phone, email, text messaging, and video calls. Sign up or join a virtual social network that includes service members and Veterans.
- Keep in touch with fellow Veterans and assist them in navigating this new environment if they are having a hard time. Teach them how to use VA Video Connect through the VA mobile app store as VA increases virtual health and mental health appointment availability.
- As a Veteran, you have been uniquely trained in emergency response situations. Your resilience and strength can assist others during these times. Connection can also happen when you give back to your community by sharing your expertise and support with family, friends, and neighbors through acts of kindness and volunteer opportunities which will arise.

### Practice good self-care and remember to re-fuel:

- Get fresh air every day, even if this means opening the windows and turning on a fan.
- Drink plenty of water and eat good nutritious foods.
- Find ways to move your body, as you are able.
- Create a routine that includes getting to sleep and waking up at a reasonable time.
- Give each other emotional space and take breaks.
- Reach out for professional support, often available via phone or virtually.
- Limit the amount of time you watch COVID-19 related news stories and use reputable sources.

## Caregiver Support Program Resources\*

- Annie Caregiver Text Support is VA's text messaging service that promotes self-care for caregivers. Caregivers need a phone capable of text messaging to enroll.
- Building Better Caregivers™ (BBC) is a 6-week online workshop for caregivers of Veterans of all eras who are caring for someone with dementia, memory problems, post-traumatic disorder, a serious brain injury, or any other serious injury or illness. BBC helps caregivers in two keyways: training in how to provide better care, and helping caregivers learn how to manage their own emotions, stress, and physical health.
- Caregiver Education Calls are monthly telephone education calls for caregivers with a theme of "Care for the Caregiver." The topics change monthly and scripts and audio recordings of the calls can be found on the CSP website.
- Caregiver Support Line (CSL) offers support by caring licensed professionals. The CSL, 1-855-260-3274, is available toll free 8 a.m.- 8 p.m. E.T., Monday through Friday.
- Caregiver Support Program Website contains tips, tools, videos and links to resources for caregivers of Veterans of all eras. The link is: <https://www.caregiver.va.gov>.
- Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH VA) Intervention\* is an evidenced-based

intervention that is delivered by VA clinical staff to provide individual support to stressed and burdened caregivers of Veterans of all eras, and those with dementia, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis (MS), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

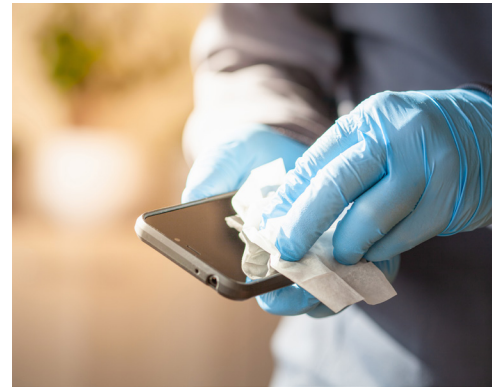
\* For more information, please contact your local CSC located at [https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New\\_CSC\\_Page.asp](https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp).

## VA Resources

- VA's COVID-19 home: This is VA's home for all COVID resources and information about VA's response. <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/>
- Frequently asked questions for Veterans about accessing VA health benefits during COVID-19: This FAQ is updated frequently with information and guidance for Veterans about different ways to access VA health benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://www.va.gov/coronavirus-veteran-frequently-asked-questions/>
- VA mental health resources & guidance for Veterans during the COVID-19 outbreak: This page includes helpful guidance, articles, and applications as well as instructions for Veterans about accessing mental health care during the COVID-19 outbreak. <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/coronavirus/>







- VA PTSD & Managing Stress COVID-19 provides practical steps and a printable handout for Veterans with PTSD and their families, to improve well-being related to increased stress and anxiety, as well as feelings of uncertainty. [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID\\_managing\\_stress.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_managing_stress.asp)
- VA Intimate Partner Violence Prevention COVID-19 provides resources and supports when relationship conflict occurs and escalates during times of crisis. <https://www.socialwork.va.gov/IPV/Index.asp>
- VA Suicide Prevention Toolkit for Caregivers includes important information about suicide prevention, as well as evidence-based mental health and substance use disorder treatments that can help Veterans recover and meet their goals. This toolkit also offers resources that anyone can access in the event of a crisis: <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/VA-Suicide-Prevention-Toolkit-for-Caregivers.pdf>

- Caregiver Action Network COVID-19 Tips: <https://caregiveraction.org/covid-19>
- Elizabeth Dole Foundation COVID-19 Resources: <https://hiddenheroes.org/coronavirus/>
- Family Caregiver Alliance COVID -19 Resources & Articles: <https://www.caregiver.org/coronavirus-covid-19-resources-and-articles-family-caregivers>
- Rosalyn Carter Institute COVID-19 Tips: <https://www.rosalynncarter.org/programs/covid-caregiving/>
- Sesame Street caring for young children: <https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring>

*\*\*Disclaimer: This list is not all inclusive. Links will take you outside of the Department of Veterans Affairs. VA does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of the linked websites.*

## Additional Resources\*\*

- AARP COVID-19 Caregiving Tips: <https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/basics/info-2020/coronavirus-tips-for-caregivers.html?intcmp=AE-CAR-BB>
- American Red Cross Military and Caregiver Network: <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/military-families/services-for-veterans/military-veteran-caregiver-network.html>





# Home Safety Instructions for COVID-19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you have been exposed to someone with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 and are experiencing fever with either cough or shortness of breath, you might have COVID-19. You can contact your doctor to see if you need to be tested.

## Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick or test positive for COVID-19:

### 1. Stay home except to get medical care

- **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 can recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor:** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency.
- **Avoid public transportation:** Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

### 2. Home isolation: Separate yourself from other people in your home

- **Stay away from others:** As much as possible, you should stay in an isolated “sick room” that is away from other people in your home. If you can, use a separate bathroom.
- **Call ahead:** If you have a medical appointment, call your doctor’s office or emergency department, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19 to help the office protect themselves and other patients.

### 3. Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people and before you enter a healthcare provider’s office.

- **If you are caring for others:** If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.

### 4. Cover your coughs and sneezes

- **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands:** Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

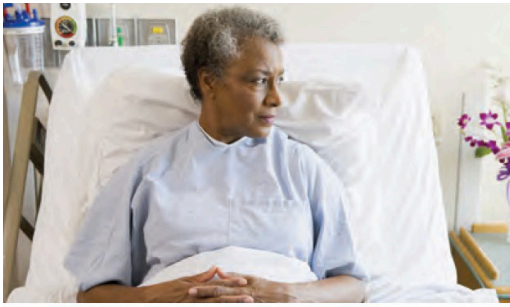
### 5. Clean your hands often

- **Wash hands:** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water are the best option. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- **Hand sanitizer:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

### 6. Avoid sharing personal household items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.

- **Wash thoroughly after use:** After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.
7. **Routinely Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday**
- **This includes:** phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, bedside tables, or any areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
  - **Clean and disinfect your isolation area (“sick room”) and bathroom**
    - » If possible, let someone else clean and disinfect the surfaces in common areas, but not your “sick room” and bathroom.
    - » If someone else needs to clean and disinfect a sick person’s room or bathroom, they should wear a mask and wait as long as possible after the sick person has used the bathroom.
  - **Household cleaners and disinfectants:** Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent. Then, use a household disinfectant.
    - » Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
    - » Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
8. **Monitor your symptoms**
- **Call before going to the doctor or ER:** Seek medical care right away if your illness is worsening. Before going in, call ahead and tell them your symptoms. They will tell you what to do.
  - **Wear a facemask:** If possible, put on a facemask before you enter the building. If you can’t put on a facemask, try to keep a at least 6 feet away from other people.
  - **Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department:** Your local health authorities will give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.
9. **If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately.**
- Emergency warning signs include:
- Trouble breathing
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Discontinuing home isolation**
- For individuals with symptoms who are confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 and are directed to care for themselves at home, you can discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:
- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, which is defined as your fever going away without the use of fever-reducing medications AND improvement in respiratory symptoms, such as cough, shortness of breath AND at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
  - Individuals with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue home isolation when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness.
- For Additional Information:**
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/COVIDcasepositive.pdf>



## Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health:

### TIPS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION DURING AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK

#### *What Is Social Distancing?*

Social distancing is a way to keep people from interacting closely or frequently enough to spread an infectious disease. Schools and other gathering places such as movie theaters may close, and sports events and religious services may be cancelled.

#### *What Is Quarantine?*

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. It lasts long enough to ensure the person has not contracted an infectious disease.

#### *What Is Isolation?*

Isolation prevents the spread of an infectious disease by separating people who are sick from those who are not. It lasts as long as the disease is contagious.

The government has the right to enforce federal and state laws related to public health if people within the country get sick with highly contagious diseases that have the potential to develop into outbreaks or pandemics.

This tip sheet describes feelings and thoughts you may have during and after social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. It also suggests ways to care for your behavioral health during these experiences and provides resources for more help.

### What To Expect: Typical Reactions

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations such as infectious disease outbreak that requires social distancing, quarantine, or isolation. People may feel:

- Anxiety, worry, or fear related to:
  - Your own health status
  - The health status of others whom you may have exposed to the disease
  - The resentment that your friends and family may feel if they need to go into quarantine as a result of contact with you
  - The experience of monitoring yourself, or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of the disease

## Introduction

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, local officials may require the public to take measures to limit and control the spread of the disease. This tip sheet provides information about social distancing, quarantine, and isolation.



- Time taken off from work and the potential loss of income and job security
- The challenges of securing things you need, such as groceries and personal care items
- **Concern** about being able to effectively care for children or others in your care
- **Uncertainty or frustration** about how long you will need to remain in this situation, and uncertainty about the future
- **Loneliness** associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones
- **Anger** if you think you were exposed to the disease because of others' negligence
- **Boredom and frustration** because you may not be able to work or engage in regular day-to-day activities
- **Uncertainty or ambivalence** about the situation
- **A desire to use alcohol or drugs** to cope
- **Symptoms of depression**, such as feelings of hopelessness, changes in appetite, or sleeping too little or too much
- **Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, such as intrusive distressing memories, flashbacks (reliving the event), nightmares, changes in thoughts and mood, and being easily startled

If you or a loved one experience any of these reactions for 2 to 4 weeks or more, contact your health care provider or one of the resources at the end of this tip sheet.

## Ways To Support Yourself During Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation

### *UNDERSTAND THE RISK*

Consider the real risk of harm to yourself and others around you. The public perception of risk during a situation such as an infectious disease outbreak is often inaccurate. Media coverage may create the impression that people are in immediate danger when really the risk for infection may be very low. Take steps to get the facts:

Stay up to date on what is happening, while limiting your media exposure. Avoid watching or listening to news reports 24/7 since this tends to increase anxiety and worry. Remember that children are especially affected by what they hear and see on television.

Look to credible sources for information on the infectious disease outbreak (see page 3 for sources of reliable outbreak-related information).

### *BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE*

Speaking out about your needs is particularly important if you are in quarantine, since you may not be in a hospital or other facility where your basic needs are met. Ensure you have what you need to feel safe, secure, and comfortable.

- Work with local, state, or national health officials to find out how you can arrange for groceries and toiletries to be delivered to your home as needed.
- Inform health care providers or health authorities of any needed medications and work with them to ensure that you continue to receive those medications.

### *EDUCATE YOURSELF*

Health care providers and health authorities should provide information on the disease, its diagnosis, and treatment.

- Do not be afraid to ask questions—clear communication with a health care provider may help reduce any distress associated with social distancing, quarantine, or isolation.
- Ask for written information when available.
- Ask a family member or friend to obtain information in the event that you are unable to secure this information on your own.

### *WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYER TO REDUCE FINANCIAL STRESS*

If you're unable to work during this time, you may experience stress related to your job status or financial situation.

- Provide your employer with a clear explanation of why you are away from work.
- Contact the U.S. Department of Labor toll-free at 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243) about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows U.S. employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for serious medical conditions, or to care for a family member with a serious medical condition.
- Contact your utility providers, cable and Internet provider, and other companies from whom you get monthly bills to explain your situation and request alternative bill payment arrangements as needed.
- If approved by health authorities and your health care providers, arrange for your friends and loved ones to bring you newspapers, movies, and books.
- Sign up for emergency alerts via text or email to ensure you get updates as soon as they are available.
- Call SAMHSA's free 24-hour Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990, if you feel lonely or need support.
- Use the Internet, radio, and television to keep up with local, national, and world events.
- If you need to connect with someone because of an ongoing alcohol or drug problem, consider calling your local Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous offices.

## Sources for Reliable Outbreak-Related Information

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027  
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)  
<http://www.cdc.gov>

### World Health Organization

Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization  
525 23rd Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
202-974-3000  
<http://www.who.int/en>

## TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you are in a medical facility, you may have access to health care providers who can answer your questions. However, if you are quarantined at home, and you're worried about physical symptoms you or your loved ones may be experiencing, call your doctor or other health care provider:

- Ask your provider whether it would be possible to schedule remote appointments via Skype or FaceTime for mental health, substance use, or physical health needs.
- In the event that your doctor is unavailable and you are feeling stressed or are in crisis, call the hotline numbers listed at the end of this tip sheet for support.

## CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Reaching out to people you trust is one of the best ways to reduce anxiety, depression, loneliness, and boredom during social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. You can:

- Use the telephone, email, text messaging, and social media to connect with friends, family, and others.
- Talk "face to face" with friends and loved ones using Skype or FaceTime.
- Relax your body often by doing things that work for you—take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, or engage in activities you enjoy.
- Pace yourself between stressful activities, and do something fun after a hard task.

## USE PRACTICAL WAYS TO COPE AND RELAX

- Talk about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends, if you find it helpful.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking; consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.

## After Social Distancing, Quarantine, or Isolation

You may experience mixed emotions, including a sense of relief. If you were isolated because you had the illness, you may feel sadness or anger because friends and loved ones may have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even though you have been determined not to be contagious.

The best way to end this common fear is to learn about the disease and the actual risk to others. Sharing this information will often calm fears in others and allow you to reconnect with them.

If you or your loved ones experience symptoms of extreme stress—such as trouble sleeping, problems with eating too much or too little, inability to carry out routine daily activities, or using drugs or alcohol to cope—speak to a health care provider or call one of the hotlines listed to the right for a referral.

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If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

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HHS Publication No. SMA-14-4894  
(2014)

## Helpful Resources

### Hotlines

#### SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English and español)

SMS: Text TalkWithUs to 66746

SMS (español): "Hablanos" al 66746

TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Website (English): <http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov>

Website (español): <http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/espanol.aspx>

#### SAMHSA's National Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (24/7/365 Treatment Referral Information Service in English and español)

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

#### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Toll-Free (English): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Toll-Free (español): 1-888-628-9454

TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

Website (English): <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Website (español): <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/gethelp/spanish.aspx>

#### Treatment Locator

Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator

Website: <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator/home>

#### SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center

Toll-Free: 1-800-308-3515

Email: [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov)

Website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>

*\*Note: Inclusion or mention of a resource in this fact sheet does not imply endorsement by the Center for Mental Health Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



# Community Resources

(Listing does not mean endorsements by VA)

## General Information

- Palm Beach County  
<https://211palmbeach.org/coronavirus>
- Treasure Coast  
<https://211palmbeach.org/coronavirus>

## Online or Telephone Counseling and Support

- Catholic Charities Counseling Support Line  
1-844-848-6777  
<https://www.ccdpb.org/covid-19-pandemic-response/>
- Institute on Aging's Friendship Line (Adults ages 60 or older)  
1-800-971-0016  
<https://www.ioaging.org/services/all-inclusive-health-care/friendship-line>
- Turn 2 Me Online Mental Health Support  
<https://www.turn2me.ie/>

## Mental Health Services in the Community

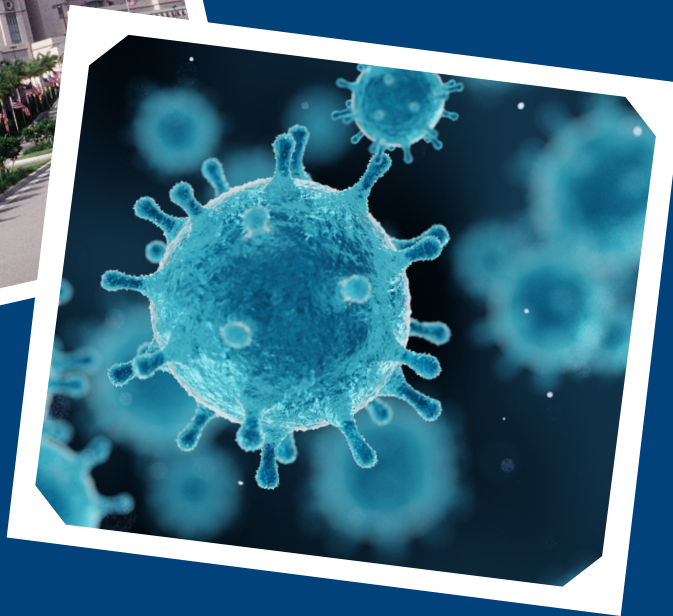
- Outpatient Behavioral Health Services at JFK Medical Center, North Campus  
561-882-0252
- Teletherapy and Telepsychiatry Services at Suncoast Mental Health
  - Martin County: 772-221-8585
  - St. Lucie County: 772-489-4726
  - Indian River County: 772-564-8616
  - Okeechobee County: 863-824-0300
  - <https://www.suncoastmentalhealth.org>



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
West Palm Beach VA Medical Center





**Veterans  
Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



**LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH ONLINE**  
**FIND US @VAWESTPALMBEACH**

### **WEST PALM BEACH VA MEDICAL CENTER**

7305 N. Military Trail • West Palm Beach, Florida 33410  
[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) [www.westpalmbeach.va.gov](http://www.westpalmbeach.va.gov)

**Local VA Connect: 1-561-422-6838**

**Toll Free VA Connect: 1-866-383-9036**

**VA Tel-Care Nurse (After 4:00 p.m.): 1-877-741-3400**

MEDICAL MEDIA JOB #G89 — 04-23-20